

Whither the Yankees?

Club's Top Brass and Fans Are in Dark About Future of Stengel and Weiss

By JOHN DREBINGER

"If anyone says he knows what is about to happen in our organization he is strictly guessing. Why? Because right now we honestly do not know."

The speaker was Dan Topping, co-owner of the New York Yankees. Sitting alongside him was his partner, Del Webb, who nodded in accord.

"Believe me," said Topping as he leaned back from his desk in the Yankees' Fifth Avenue suite, "nobody is more anxious to clear this up than we are. But there are still a few points that have to be settled. Until then, there is nothing we can say."

And on this enigmatic note must remain hanging the answer to two sizzling questions that seem to have overshadowed everything else in the wake of the 1960 world series. For even before the fans of Pittsburgh had dug themselves out from under one of the most tumultuous victory celebrations in world series history, fans were asking:

Is Casey Stengel, who led the Yankees to ten American League pennants in the last twelve years, through as manager?

Is George M. Weiss, general manager and builder of the mighty Yankee dynasty for more than a quarter of a century, also stepping out?

Stengel Keeps Silent

Neither was shedding light on the matter yesterday. Neither were the two owners.

The 70-year-old Casey, back from Pittsburgh, where his Bombers lost a dramatic seventh-game struggle to the Pirates on Bill Mazeroski's ninth-inning home run, was keeping himself incommunicado in his hotel quarters.

According to his wife, Edna, "Casey is going to take a complete rest for the next few days. I have asked him to do this myself. I told him I thought he should relax, forget everything and think this all out for himself."

All of which poses still another question. Is the final decision on Stengel's retirement to be his or that of the owners?

Friends close to Stengel for many years insist they know he does not want to quit baseball and that if he has stepped out of a Yankee uniform for the last time, he most certainly would appear elsewhere on the baseball scene.

Also, it has been no secret that back in August, when the Yankees were still stumbling along in the pennant race, there were manifestations in the Yankee front office that the brass was not wholly satisfied with the way things were going.

However, then came the amazing fifteen-game winning streak with which the Bombers wound up the regular season and made a runaway of the American League pennant race in the final two weeks. Then came the club's heroic though losing fight in the world series.

Add to this the pressure brought from other quarters—the wire from Mayor Wagner urging that Casey remain here and the petition from the baseball writers—and all these factors do indicate that, if the

owners at one time did contemplate a change, they are now undergoing a change of heart. Otherwise, why all this delay?

Still another angle is that the two owners themselves are not in accord and are now taking time to settle their differences. Meanwhile, baseball fans the nation over will have to sit with consuming patience.

If Stengel does go, it is almost certain that Ralph Houk, a Yankee coach and a former Bomber catcher and manager in the organization's farm system, will receive the post. On this, however, neither owner would make any comment yesterday.

Mayo Smith Report Denied

Topping, however, did scout a report yesterday that Mayo Smith, a former manager of the Phillies and Reds and now working in the Yankee farm system, might be named as Stengel's successor. "You can say," said Topping, "that at no time have we ever considered naming Mayo manager."

Also put to rout were reports, heard frequently, that there would be other changes in the Yankee front office, including the return of Arthur E. (Red) Patterson, public relations director of Los Angeles Dodgers. Topping made it clear that Robert O. Fishel, the Yankees' publicity man, was remaining with the Bombers.

As for Weiss, the impression grows that the general manager will step out. Unlike Stengel, whose contract expires with this year, Weiss' contract still has several years to go and he probably will remain with the club in an advisory capacity.

If Weiss retires as general manager, his successor most likely will be Roy Hamey, at present the assistant general manager of the Yanks and a former general manager of the Pirates and Phillies. At the same time Jack White, now general manager of the Richmond farm club, would move up to the parent club.

Richardson Is Honored

Yankee players met at the Stadium yesterday for the last time this year to collect their personal belongings preparatory to heading for their homes.

Little Bobby Richardson, whose electrifying grand-slam homer in the third game provided one of the many highlights of the world series, was honored at a luncheon yesterday. He received a Corvette sports car from Sport magazine as the outstanding player of the series. It marked the first time the award went to a member of the losing team in the world series. The crack little second baseman set a series record with twelve runs batted in.

Yogi Berra, accompanied by his wife, set out for a vacation trip to Bermuda, one of the gifts bestowed on him on Berra Day at the Stadium last summer.

Whitey Ford, whose two brilliant shutouts also made him one of the Yankee heroes in defeat, was preparing to return to his desk with a brokerage company. And Hector Lopez, the Panamanian, was preparing to get married.